

Communication Skills Building for Hispanic Parents of Preteen Girls



Facilitator's Guide



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
How to Use this Online Video	3-4
Welcome and Introduction to Parents	5-6
Scene 1: Communicating, Listening, & Asking the Right Questions	7
Scene 2: Self-Image & Boys.....	8
Scene 3: Time Management/Organizational Skills & Dating.....	9-10
Scene 4: Discipline & Generational Differences.....	11
Scene 5: Appropriate Dress & Internet Dangers.....	12-13
Scene 6: Parenting & Setting Rules	14
Scene 7: Peer Pressure (Smoking, Drugs, & Alcohol).....	15
Scene 8: Issues Summary & Resolution.....	16
Closing the Session: Lessons Learned	17-18
Planning Checklist	19





Introduction

The facilitator's guide, along with the companion online video and tip sheet for parents, was developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, for Hispanic parents/guardians of preteen girls. These educational materials will serve as resources for parents addressing problems that can occur as their daughters mature. The main purpose of the materials is to offer parents suggestions for handling difficult situations and help them improve their communication skills with their preteens.

The facilitator's guide was developed for facilitators to use along with the online video in group settings and in order to promote dialogue among parents. It is important that you take a few minutes to add your own introduction and personal touch for the group you are addressing, and that you adapt the instructional material to your particular audience.

Every group will be different, so take the time to customize the suggestions for dialogue provided in this guide for your participants' particular needs. Use the Planning Checklist, provided to help you prepare for the session. Whenever possible, meet with the group representative or contact person beforehand to determine the participants' characteristics and needs. The Planning Checklist will help you manage your time and choose the topics and online video scenes that address the specific needs of your group.

The online video alone is 47 minutes long; therefore, the time required to cover all of the materials will depend on the following: how much time participants can be available, the scenes in the video you choose to show, the topics you choose to discuss and the time you allow to discuss each of them, and the group's needs. The video is in Spanish with English subtitles.

NOTE: It is recommended that you have more than one session with your participants in order to discuss all the topics covered by the video and to allow you adequate time to cover each topic in as much detail as possible and obtain the most benefit from the materials. Always leave enough time to have a rich discussion with the participants and to properly wrap up the session.



How to Use this Online Video

This video has been developed in a telenovela (soap opera) style and has eight scenes.

A few recommendations to consider:

- Pause the video after each scene so the parents can discuss what they just saw and how they felt at that moment.
- This guide provides a set of suggested questions for each scene to help you have a productive dialogue with the group of participants. You might want to review them ahead of time, choose the ones you feel will be more relevant to your group, and/or adapt them in order to make them more appropriate. For example, some participants could also be single parents or guardians; tailor questions according to their needs.
- You can also come up with additional open-ended questions to use with participants.
- It is important to invite all participants to share ideas and experiences, and ask questions.
- A tip sheet with suggestions is available for parents to use with their daughters at home. This sheet can be handed out at the end of the session.

This video and its collateral materials have been developed taking into account the different Hispanic communities in the United States, including Puerto Rico. Therefore, this guide has been designed to easily adapt it to the characteristics of the group you are working with.

The guide and the parents' tip sheet have been developed in Spanish to be used with parents who prefer Spanish or are Spanish dominant; and in English for second and third generation Hispanic parents who prefer English or are English dominant. With this in mind, the guide includes additional questions for the groups of Hispanic parents who are still in the acculturation process and are facing cultural differences.

This video can be used in a group setting or by parents at home, so feel free to give parents the links to the online video along with the tip sheet. You will also be able to access the video on www.womenshealth.gov.

ICONS KEY:

Note to facilitator



Tips to share with parents



Explanations of cultural factors



Start the online video



Stop the online video



Note: There are specific boxes with symbols to differentiate a note to the facilitator, a tip to share with parents, and explanations of cultural factors.





The online video is composed of the following eight segments:
(Total running time: 47 minutes)

1. Communicating, Listening, & Asking the Right Questions

Scene 1: 0:00–7:46 (7:46 min)

2. Self-Image & Boys

Scene 2: 7:46–12:54 (5:08 min)

3. Time Management/Organizational Skills & Dating

Scene 3: 12:54–18:29 (5:35 min)

4. Discipline & Generational Differences

Scene 4: 18:29–23:11 (4:42 min)

5. Appropriate Dress & Internet Dangers

Scene 5: 23:11–29:25 (6:14 min)

6. Parenting & Setting Rules

Scene 6: 29:25–31:58 (2:33 min)

7. Peer Pressure (Smoking, Drugs, & Alcohol)

Scene 7: 31:58–40:28 (8:30 min)

8. Issues Summary & Resolution

Scene 8: 40:28–46:15 (5:47 min)



Starting the Session: Welcome and Introduction to Parents

Please introduce yourself and have the group members introduce themselves. You might want to ask them to say their names, how many kids they have and their ages, and any issues they would like to share.

What's It All About?



SCENE SUMMARY

This section is meant to be a brief introduction to the parents to give them background information on this video and its purpose. Please share/adapt this information with your group before watching the online video.

If you are a parent of a preteen daughter, you know that talking to her isn't always easy. Today's 9- to 12-year-old girls are growing up faster, both emotionally and physically, and are facing challenges that you as parents may not have had to deal with at their age. Most girls in this age group, while not yet teenagers, also want to show that they are no longer "kids" and will often try to express their independence whenever they can.

As girls move through this key stage in their lives and struggle to find ways to connect and work out their issues, their actions can sometimes lead to problems at home and in the community. When this happens for your daughter, you may find yourself asking, "How do I know what she's thinking or feeling? How do I ask without being too nosy, or without getting upset or making her angry? How do I show her that I want to help without being too pushy?" The challenge is to be aware of those "teachable moments" and use them so that she feels, accepts, and perhaps even welcomes your advice.





The goal of this online video is to make it easier for you and your daughter to talk more openly about what she may be going through at this phase in her life and provide her with guidance on how to handle challenging situations without getting into trouble. This video was designed with parents of preteen girls in mind, although parents of older girls can use it as well. The video focuses on major issues that young girls are either dealing with now or may face as they continue to mature into young women, such as:

- Dating
- Peer pressure
- Self-image
- Internet dangers
- Father's role in discipline
- Generational differences
- Organizational and time management skills

In this video you will follow the lives of the Gómez family as they experience typical parent-child issues. The video demonstrates how the parents “grow” in their parenting and listening skills as the scenes progress. The video is divided into eight scenes that interrelate with each other to illustrate a storyline that reflects growing up in a typical Latino family. The members of the Gómez family are:

- **Sandy Gómez**, the youngest of the three girls, who is 9 years old.
- **Esperanza (Espie) Gómez**, the middle sister, who is 11 years old and the main character of the story.
- **Jessica Gómez**, the oldest of the three sisters, who is 18 years old.
- **José Gómez**, the father of the three girls.
- **Leticia Gómez**, the mother of the three girls.
- **Nelly**, the godmother (comadre) and mother to a teenage daughter, Karina.

Now we will start the video.



Scene 1: Communicating, Listening, & Asking the Right Questions

Length: 0:00–7:46 (7:46 min) START



SCENE SUMMARY

Sandy is on the phone talking to a new friend she made at school. Mom is listening to the conversation and learns that Sandy relies on her godmother or grandmother to talk about certain issues instead of going to her parents. The godmother comes for a visit and tells Leticia about a parenting course she took and how she learned to listen to her daughter as well as how to ask the right questions in order to communicate with her.



STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. After what happens in this scene, why do you think Sandy feels more comfortable talking to her godmother or grandmother instead of her parents?
2. What do you think about the mother's reaction to Sandy's phone conversation regarding the situation at school with Ramona? In what other ways could she have initiated the conversation with her daughter?
3. Do you agree with the suggestions Nelly gives to Leticia on how to better communicate with her children? Why or why not? What other suggestions could you give Leticia?
4. Nelly tells Leticia to use open-ended questions, which are questions that cannot be answered by "yes" or "no." Why do you think open-ended questions are important when talking with your daughters?



Discuss examples of good open-ended questions. For example: "Did you like your teacher?" Is that an open- or close-ended question? Instead you can ask, "What's your new teacher like?" Even if your daughter just answers "She/he's okay," you should continue asking open-ended questions to encourage her to tell you more, such as, "What did you like about her/him?"





Instead of saying “no” without explanations, parents need to take time to ask their daughters questions and give reasons instead of just saying “no.”

Scene 2: Self-Image & Boys

Length: 7:46–12:54 (5:08 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

The three sisters are in the bedroom and getting dressed for school. Espie has stuffed her bra with gym socks to get the attention of a boy two years older. In addition, she comments that she’s unhappy with her appearance. Jessica explains to Espie she should like herself as she is. Mom comes in the room, remembers what the comadre mentioned about listening to her kids, and joins the girls in their conversation. However, when mother learns that Espie likes a boy who is two years older, she immediately reacts negatively, telling Espie she is too young to be thinking about boys and needs to concentrate on studying.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. How can Leticia address Espie’s concerns about her appearance?
2. Espie seems very worried about her body and the way she looks. What are other self-esteem issues that preteens tend to focus on?



Remind parents that self-esteem refers to how your kids see themselves — how they think they look and what they believe others think of them.

How can parents guide their children through this difficult phase?

3. In this scene Leticia takes the godmother’s advice toward better communication with her children. Who can tell us what that was?
4. Leticia follows the advice we just talked about. However, when she learns of Espie’s interest in an older boy, she immediately reacts negatively. If you were advising Leticia, how could she have responded differently to keep the line of communication open with Espie?

Scene 3: Time Management/ Organizational Skills & Dating

Length: 12:54–18:29 (5:35 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

Part 1 – It is morning at the Gómez house. The father can't find his keys and some of his tools. The girls are running late for school. Each of them ends up leaving something behind. The girls are grounded for being so disorganized.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. From what you saw, why is it important that preteens learn time management? How about adults?
2. How can Leticia and José set a good example for their girls about managing their time and staying organized? Who has suggestions for things they could do?
3. How can Leticia help Sandy and Espie better manage their time? How useful would it be if each one of your children had a personal agenda or planner to write down all of their activities for the day?
4. Sometimes parents and other family members tend to be disorganized. How can planners or calendars be useful for the entire family? What other tools can help families be better organized?





Parents set the first example for their children, so if every member of the family learns to better manage their time and be more organized, everyone will feel less stressed, and family conflicts will be avoided.

Create the habits of always placing things in one specific place.

Help your daughter to be realistic about what she can accomplish and how much time she needs to accomplish different chores and tasks.

CONTINUE



SCENE SUMMARY

Part 2—The father comes home with a note he found in his car. Espie is telling a friend how much she likes Tony, who is older than she is, and that he has invited her to his house. The father is upset and shows the note to Leticia. She also gets upset because she had said, “NO boys.” They both go upstairs to scold Espie. Espie points out some differences between her parents and her friends’ parents.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

5. Espie directly defies her mom’s orders about Tony. Why do you think Espie’s parents got so upset that she wants to date Tony? Is it because she defied her mom’s orders? Is it because Tony is an older boy? Is it because they might think she could engage in sexual experimentation at an early age?
6. What do you think about the father’s reaction? What do you think about the mother’s reaction? By getting angry did they resolve the issue? Why or why not? How do you think other parents would react? Do you think this reaction has to do with our Hispanic background?
7. How do you think parents can discuss their concerns with their daughters?
8. Espie comments that her friends’ parents let them do so and so. We have all heard these lines before; we might have even used them when we were teenagers. How can Leticia and José respond to this? What advice could we as a group offer Leticia and José on how to address this situation?

Scene 4: Discipline & Generational Differences

Length: 18:29–23:11 (4:42 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

Mom and Dad are talking about the discussion they just had with Espie. The father is really upset and just wants to punish her and prohibit her from having any male friends. The godmother comes to have dinner with the family and points out to them how hard it is for their kids to grow up with cultural and generational differences. She also gives them advice on how to communicate and discuss the rules of the house with their children. She encourages them to look into the possibility of joining a parents group to share their concerns and parenting issues with other parents with similar issues.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. What consequences should Espie face for disobeying her parents? How can Espie's parents help her understand their point of view in this situation? How can Leticia and José better address this if they acknowledge her point of view?
2. Why do you think Leticia feels that it's hard to talk to kids "nowadays"? Why does she think it was "easier" with Jessica?
3. Nelly mentions that children nowadays are exposed to many things at younger ages. What can parents do in light of this?



Parents need to explain the different ways in which culture affects their way of looking at things and some of the benefits of a different cultural perspective (for example, waiting to have sex until you get married). Parents need to talk with their daughters about how they all feel about these differences. Rules regarding these differences should reflect a balance between the different cultures and traditions.



Raising a child in a different country can also create conflict among families when culture and traditions are compared and questioned by the children. If Espie had said in this scene, "Dad, why are you so old-fashioned? All the kids my age hang out, but you act as if we were in your era... You don't want to change," how could her parents have responded to the cultural differences between their family and her friends' families? How can the Gómez family find a balance between these differences?





Parents need to ask their daughters what they think about a certain situation to understand their point of view and then talk with them about the risks and consequences they face for certain decisions and actions.

Parents need to set clear rules and have their daughters participate in setting those rules to try to find some agreement between both points of view. The consequences of breaking those rules need to be clear.

Remember that **YOU** are the parent and that the final decision is yours.

Scene 5: Appropriate Dress & Internet Dangers

Length: 23:11–29:25 (6:14 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

Espie left her social media page open, and Jessica catches Sandy snooping at Espie's page. Jessica sees some pictures of Espie wearing inappropriate clothes for an 11-year-old. Mom walks into the study room, and Jessica shows her the pictures and alerts her to the dangers of social media sites and the Internet in general. The mother is really upset and calls Espie to ask her where she got the clothes in the pictures. After trying to deny she has worn them, she just argues that "everybody's doing so."

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Espie borrowed clothes from her friends rather than ask her mom to buy more stylish clothes for her?
2. Leticia definitely considers these clothes to be inappropriate for her daughter. How can parents distinguish for their children the difference between stylish clothing and inappropriate clothing?
3. Leticia responds to Espie's discontent with her clothes by saying, "You'll wear what I buy you." What do you think are other ways Leticia could have dealt with this situation? How can Leticia work with Espie to compromise and reach an agreement on where to draw the line between stylish and inappropriate?



What are some differences among the things that your daughters are exposed to nowadays when living in the U.S. versus your countries of origin? What can parents do about this?

Another key issue mentioned in this scene is the use of the Internet and what are now known as social media sites. There are positive and negative things associated with using the Internet.

4. Can anyone tell me what some positive things are?
5. Now, can you tell me what some possible risks associated with the Internet are? How can parents discuss these risks with their daughters?
6. What steps can parents take to control what their daughters do when using the Internet?
7. Jessica suggests that her mother learn more about the Internet. What recommendations can we, as a group, offer Leticia and other parents for learning more about the Internet?
8. Cell phones and other electronic devices have also become important tools for children nowadays. What are some negative consequences that the use of these devices can have on children? How can parents prevent some of these things from happening?



By setting rules for Internet use, parents can manage their children's online activities. Parents also can set schedules and monitor the use of other electronic devices.

“Social media” refers to online social instruments of communication, allowing mostly anyone with access to the Internet to share existing information and even create new content. Facebook, MySpace, and Hi5 are examples of social media networking sites. Probe on texting and how parents monitor the children's devices. Ask parents if they are familiar with acronyms or “teen talk” abbreviations such as “LOL,” “BRB,” etc.



The Internet allows easy access to information, and when used correctly serves as an educational and communications tool. You can do research on school projects or on any particular topic, share information, communicate with friends and family through different social media sites, shop, and pay bills.

Among the risks of the Internet and social media sites are access to inappropriate sexual and violent materials, dissemination of private information without one's consent (including pictures), exposure to sexual predatory acts and identity theft (documents, bank accounts, credit cards), and misuse of time.





Setting schedules to watch TV, go to bed, and turn off lights can help improve time management skills for all family members.

Scene 6: Parenting & Setting Rules

Length: 29:25–31:58 (2:33 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

The parents come home after attending the parents group that the comadre had suggested looking into. It has been a long day, and they are tired, but they realize that talking to the comadre and other parents about some of the preteen issues they are facing with Espie is helping them to open up to their kids' point of view. They think about how to involve everyone in the family in discussing and setting some of the house rules.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. In what ways can sharing their parenting issues with other people in or outside of their family be helpful to Leticia and José?
2. In this scene José tells us that he will do anything for the benefit of his children. How does the commitment that Leticia and José have made to be unified in their approach to parenting benefit them? How about their children? Why should parents be more proactive than reactive when communicating with their children?
3. In what other ways can parents help their children develop better organizational habits?
4. How do you think establishing routines can be helpful in reducing family conflict and stress?

Scene 7: Peer Pressure (Smoking, Drugs, & Alcohol)

Length: 31:58–40:28 (8:30 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

Espie has skipped class, and her parents learn about it. The father gets very upset and feels that Espie is just not listening to them and is being rebellious for no reason. He is about to lose his temper, but the mother tries to calm him down and asks him to try to put into practice what they have learned. When Espie comes home, she first tries lying about skipping class, and although her parents get upset about her lying and judge her initially, they try to understand why she did it, and listen and talk to her. They discuss peer pressure and its consequences.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. What do you think about the way José reacted when he learned Espie had skipped class to go to a friend's house? Do you think other parents would react the same way?
2. This scene represents a turning point in the way Leticia and José approach difficult parenting issues. What are your thoughts about the way they handled the whole situation? What do you think made José change?
3. Considering the significant impact of peer pressure on teens, why is it important for parents to clearly state their expectations?
4. José uses a personal story to talk about the risks of peer pressure and its consequences regarding drugs and alcohol. What are your thoughts about starting conversations on difficult issues this way?
5. What are other ways the Gómez parents could have started such a conversation?
6. In a similar situation to this scene, would you be able to control your anger and turn it into a learning experience as the Gómez family did? Why or why not?



Using a personal example of someone you know well, or of someone in the family, can be a good lead-in to talk about the consequences of certain actions.



Remind parents that peer pressure refers to the influence applied by friends or class peers to change a person's attitudes, values, or behaviors in order to fit the group's norms and ways of doing things; for example, pressure to experiment with drugs and alcohol, etc.





Acknowledging your child's efforts will encourage them to continue working hard and sets an example for the other members of the family.

Physical exercise can help improve one's mental health and self-esteem as well as physical health. Parents need to help their daughters balance their time for leisure, study, and exercise in order to be holistically healthy.

Scene 8: Issues Summary & Resolution

Length: 40:28–46:15 (5:47 min)

START



SCENE SUMMARY

Espie comes home from school, and her parents have just received her school progress report for the first semester. Espie has improved a lot in school since her last report, and the relationship between Espie and her parents also has improved. Everyone is really proud of her. They also realize that they all have learned a lot about communicating and listening to each other and how this is helping them solve problems as a family, as well as find a balance between the different cultures and points of view.

STOP

Suggested Discussion Questions:

1. Leticia and José are very happy with Espie's progress in school and want to celebrate. Why do you think this is important for Espie? Why is this important for the rest of the family?
2. Espie earns a C in physical education, and her father is making sure that she works more on her physical activities. Why is this important for Espie? Why is exercising important?
3. What do you think about Leticia's idea of going clothes shopping with Espie?
4. What do you think about the behavior change we have seen in José throughout the story?

Closing the Session: Lessons Learned



The closing is extremely important because it determines what the participants take away from the session. Nevertheless, we often run out of time. How many times have you heard, “Well, ladies and gentlemen, we’re out of time. Thank you very much for coming and have a good day.” This is not a good closing. Good planning and time management for each part of the session will help ensure that you have enough time to close the session properly. When you close a session, it is important to invite the group to summarize the topics that were discussed and to review the key points. Avoid lecturing, and continue to involve the participants in the dialogue.

In the beginning, we listed some of the issues the Gómez family deals with. Now that we’ve discussed each one of them, what did we learn about how to handle and communicate about:

- Dating?
- Self-image?
- Peer pressure (experimentation with drugs and alcohol)?
- Internet dangers?
- Father’s role in discipline?
- Cultural (generational) differences?
- Organizational and time management skills?

Why is it important to maintain open communication with your daughters during their preteen years?





As a final note, remind parents—

Communication is KEY!

1. Don't jump to conclusions. Take time to inquire first. Use open-ended questions to encourage your daughters to get the conversation going.
2. Show that you are interested in what your daughters have to say, and listen to them.
3. Make sure your daughters understand what the house rules are, and let them participate in setting these rules. Compromise with them on certain matters, and try to find a middle ground for both points of view. Clearly explain to them why certain things cannot be compromised. Remember that YOU are the parent!
4. Discuss cultural differences openly with your daughters. Talk with them about the way you were raised and how it is also a challenge for you as a parent and an adult to adapt to a different culture.

Final Questions and Comments



If this session is the initial one, inform the group about the possibility of holding follow-up sessions to discuss other issues. If the group will be meeting for a follow-up session soon, remind them of the date, time, and topics that will be covered.

Hand out the tip sheet for parents at the end of the session.



Planning Checklist

Information about the Organization

Organization: _____ Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ ☐ First session or ☐ Follow-up session

Information about the Participants

Sex: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Both

Ethnic Origin: _____

Language preference: ☐ Spanish ☐ English

Number of Participants: _____

Ages: _____

Session Materials

Equipment: ☐ Note pads & pens ☐ Computer with Internet access, overhead projector, and speakers
☐ Dry-erase board, chalkboard, or easel pad to take notes ☐ Tip sheet for parents

Topics and Scenes for the Session

Issues that prompted this session or points that need to be emphasized:

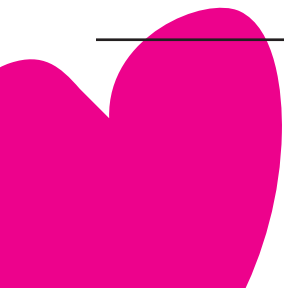
Selection will depend on the time available for the session and the needs of the participants:

- ☐ Communicating, Listening, & Asking the Right Questions [Length of scene: 7:46 min]
- ☐ Self-Image & Boys [Length of scene: 5:08 min]
- ☐ Time Management/Organization Skills & Dating [Length of scene: 5:35 min]
- ☐ Discipline & Generational Differences [Length of scene: 4:42 min]
- ☐ Appropriate Dress & Internet Dangers [Length of scene: 6:14 min]
- ☐ Parenting & Setting Rules [Length of scene: 2:33 min]
- ☐ Peer Pressure (Smoking, Drugs, & Alcohol) [Length of scene: 8:30 min]
- ☐ Issues Summary & Resolution [Length of scene: 5:47 min]

Before you fill out this form, remember to make copies for your other sessions.

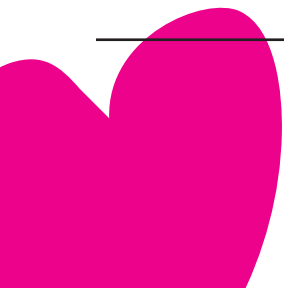


Notes



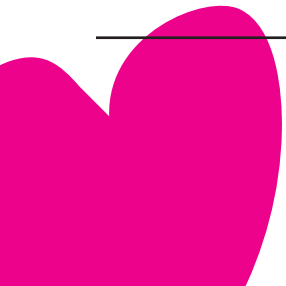


Notes





Notes





*W*omenshealth.gov

OWH Helpline: 800-994-9662



OWH
OFFICE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH